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The same poet has recorded the music that dwells in *snore*s. A party of old men on horseback are the performers:—

"But where I left them, safe go they,
Their drowsy noses drooped away
To meet the beard's attractive nest,
Push'd upward from the muffled breast.
Drowy they nod, and safe they go;
Sir Grey's good steeds the country know,
And lead the rest full soft and well,
Till snore on snore begins to swell,
Warm as owl-plumage, toned as bell;
True snores, composed of spices fine,
Supper, fresh air, and old mull'd wine.
At first they wake with start and fright,
And sniff and stare with all their might,
And sit, one moment, bolt upright:
But soon reverts each nodding crown;
It droops, it yields, it settles down;
Till in one snore, sincere and deep,
The whole grave train are fast asleep."

Leigh Hunt.

Even *whistling* has been mused:—

"The whistling ploughboy, whose shrill notes
Impart new gladness to the morning air."

Wordsworth.

TAXES ON KNOWLEDGE.

In the *Gazette*, published during the past month, by the Association for promoting the repeal of the paper duty, which is the last remaining tax upon knowledge, some very powerful arguments are used; and no one, who will take the trouble to look into the subject, can doubt for a moment the impolicy of the legislature in thus taxing the raw material of which our literary publications are manufactured. It is shewn that the paper duty interferes most vexatiously with the process of making paper, and with the employment of capital and labour; and, by increasing the price of printing paper, limits the authors' emolument, deteriorates cheap literature, and thus operates to the serious injury of the progress of the people, in intelligence and morality. One fact regarding the operation of this obnoxious tax upon the newly-created penny daily press, will serve to explain why so much excellent literary composition is served up to us upon such an inferior material. One of the daily penny papers weighs fourteen to the pound: suppose its circulation to be 20,000; that gives 6,260,000 copies per annum, equal to 447,142 lbs., or as nearly as possible, 200 tons, which, at £14 14s. per ton, gives an annual tax of £2940. When we think of this burden laid upon a newspaper, we cannot wonder at not finding the raw material worthy of the talent and labour expended upon the cheap literature of the day.

HANDEL MUSICAL FESTIVAL AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

THE Sacred Harmonic Society have put forward advertisements to the effect that they have entered into an arrangement with the Directors of the Crystal Palace Company, for celebrating a Handel Musical Festival on a grand scale, in the Central Transept of the Crystal Palace in the early part of next summer. The unprecedented extent to which it is proposed to carry the orchestra on that occasion—viz., 2300 efficient performers,—will impart an interest to this Festival, of no ordinary description. The reasons which have prompted the

Sacred Harmonic Society to undertake the project, are explained in the following manner:—that they have for some time past had under their consideration, the desirability of making proper arrangements for a Grand Musical Congress in 1859, at the centenary of Handel's death. It is known that in other countries public attention has been drawn to this subject, and already associations are being formed for the due commemoration of Handel in that year. It has been felt that England ought not to occupy a secondary position in any commemoration of this great master, considering that England was Handel's country by adoption; that he resided here for more than fifty years; that in England, and for Englishmen, and in the English language, all his great masterpieces—his oratorios—were written, and that these great works have nowhere been so much studied or so well performed as in England. It becomes, therefore, an imperative duty, that London, the metropolis which contains the ashes of the great musician, as well as the MSS. of his important works, should pre-eminently excel in any commemoration which may be suggested by the occasion. The Sacred Harmonic Society consider that they are the most proper persons to carry out the desired object. They claim, with justice, to have been the first to originate a series of performances of Handel's works in the metropolis, and to have publicly represented nearly all his sacred oratorios as complete works.

A Festival of this nature in London at the present day, should produce the broadest and grandest effects, and these can only be obtained by a very great number of musicians. Fortunately, the music of Handel permits the employment of almost unlimited force, but much difficulty would necessarily be experienced in finding a building sufficiently large to give full scope to the magnitude of the orchestra, and at the same time to admit a very large number of persons as audience. Although there are touching associations connected with the idea of a series of performances of Handel's works in Westminster Abbey, yet these must give way before the advantages which will result from the grander and more effective performance of these masterpieces, in a building possessing greater capabilities for orchestra, as well as for audience. It appears that upon the occasion of the last Festival held in Westminster Abbey, in the year 1834, the number of performers was 699, on the *Messiah* day; and the audience did not amount to 3,000 persons, although the avenues were closely filled. It will doubtless create surprise that the nave of Westminster Abbey has a clear space of only 33 feet 6 inches, being less than the width of Hanover Square Room; and that the entire width of the nave and aisles is but 74 feet, being 3 feet less than Exeter Hall. The dimensions of every building in London have been carefully compared, and it appears that the Central Transept of the Crystal Palace is much larger than any other: the width of the available space is 168 feet; length, 360 feet; and it contains 60,480 square feet. Exeter Hall, which stands next in size, is only 77 feet wide, 131 feet long, and contains but 10,087 square feet. It will thus be seen that the Crystal Palace has accommodation far beyond any building now available; and calculations which have been entered into, demonstrate that, in addition to the musicians, from 10,000 to 12,000 persons may be easily and comfortably seated in the Central Transept, with an uninterrupted view for each individual.

The intended performance in the course of next summer is proposed by way of rehearsal to the Grand Performance at the Festival of 1859. The precise arrangements are not yet definitively settled: but it is proposed that the three following oratorios—viz., *Messiah*, *Israel in Egypt*, and *Judas Maccabæus*—should be performed; that there should be a chorus of 2000 voices, with 300 instruments; and that offers of metropolitan amateur assistance should be invited to co-operate in this great celebration.